

Title: Hell hath no Fury.. Part 1

Author: Shahrressa

"I would like to see my casket, if you please Milord," Shahrressa said to the neatly dressed banker. He wordlessly pulled forth a chest for her and she inserted a little iron key into the latch. It creaked slowly open on wide hinges, and shah began sorting through it for the item she wanted.

"Hola Shahrressa," came a cheerful voice from behind her. "It's good to see you today!" Shah turned to look at the speaker and smiled broadly.

"Shakti! It's good to see you too, you're looking well!" Shakti was Shahrressa's good friend and guildmate.

Dressed in scarlet from head to toe, the magess made an impressive entrance wherever she went.

"Aye, you're looking well as well," Shakti giggled over the pleasantries and then asked the banker to bring her own strongbox. The two ladies chatted while they rumaged through their items.

"I don't why I keep some of this junk in here," Shahrressa began, pushing a stray piece of white-blonde hair from her eyes.

"It's-- "

Suddenly a glowing
blue gate opened
behind them and three
foul-smelling orcs
stepped forth from
the void within.

"Get'er! Bahwo dat red
majik humie!"

Surprised,
Shahrressa pulled her
kryss from its
sheath, even as shakti
began waveing her
hands for a spell.

"Unhand her you
foul fiends! Keep
your hands off her!"
she cried. One of the
greenish humanoids
had already clubbed
Shakti across the head
and she crumpled into
their arms.

Shahrressa's kryss
cut through nothing
but air, as they drug
her into the gate
and winked out.

Shahrressa stood on
the site where the gate
had opened. It still
tingled with magic
energy. But the
creatures had taken
Shakti. Shahrressa
pounded the ground
with her fists in
frustration. On the
ground next to Shah's
hand was a crumpled
piece of parchment and
she picked it up.

Opening it, she knew
she had a clue; it was
a map. "I must take
this to Wolfgang," she
said. And clutching it
nervously to her
breast, "He'll know
what to do." In an
instant, useing what
little magic was at her
disposal, Shah gated
herself to the Urban
Knights guildhall, a
large stone structure
near the city of

Minoc. As luck would have it, Wolfgang her guildmaster was there. He listened to her tale with a grim face.

"Show me the map," he said. And Shah wordlessly handed it to him. He stroked his chin as he studied it.

"I have a feeling I know of these orcs. I have met them in battle before.. and so has Shakti."

It was a poorly drawn map. Somply a mountain to the north, a city to the southeast with a plain inbetween. With a great big 'X' marked on the mountain." It looks to be near Britain to me," Shah told Wolfgang.

Nodding he replied, "Well let's call the guild together and start our rescue mission."

Messenger birds flew forth from the guildhall, and before long eight knights had gathered. Six men and two women, all with fire in their eyes and revenge in their hearts. Upon hearing what had happened, they readied themselves to rescue their beloved guildsister, and to teach these orcs a lesson they would not soon forget. Grimly the mage, Civ Kid opened a gate and all went through single file. Shah acted as scout and kept looking to the map as refference as she led the group to the northwest.

Standing at the edge of a large field, the salt smell of the sea on the breeze, Shah sighed heavily. Then conceded, "I'm afraid I may have led us wrong. There is no coast on this map." She could not hide the frustration in her voice and she nervously ran her hand through her hair. Every wasted moment meant that Shakti was in the orcs clutches that much longer.

The mage Warlord reached out his hand, "Her Shah.. let me see that map." After a moments study, "I know where this is. It's just to the north of us, and this 'X' is over the dugeon they call Despise."

Despise! Shahrressa had heard tales of this dungeon, but had never ventured there. It lay within the Serpent's Spine, just south of the entrance to the underground city of Wynd. And was said to be populated by the foulest murderers and criminals known to the land. It was the tainted opposite of the Virtue of Compassion. A fitting name for so cruel a place. And Shakti was held prisoner inside..

With Warlord leading the way they soon found the place. The Knights crept up on the entrance. Staying as silent as only trained and seasoned knights could.

Wolfgang stopped their advance at the edge of the forest with a gesture. Standing at the cave mouth was a figure; an orc wearing ringmail and high boots. The foul being spat on the ground and picked it's nose. The waress Lilyth made a disgusted face and muttered something under her breath. All of them felt that the sooner they rescued Shakti, the better.

With a mighty battle cry, eight knights burst forth from their cover as one, killing the guard before he could utter a warning. Entering the black hole of an entrance, they found three more waiting for them. Grunting a challenge to the Knights, they attacked. Darkness lived within the hole of Despise. It was dark, dank and full of rats. "Fah! Rats!" said Moonknight in disgust, kicking one off the stairwell. "As if orcs weren't bad enough!"

Soon the the cavern was filled with the smell of burnt orc and rat. Their way was littered with the carcasses as they headed deeper into the dungeon. The walls literily dripped with vermin- snakes, scorpions, spiders, and of course rats. Only an orc would find such a place suitable for living. Descending the stairs as quietly as possible,

Civ Kid cast a spell allowing the warriors to see in the dark caverns. The deeper they went, the colder the chill air became. Streath was just wondering aloud, how deep below the mountain were. when they came upon a great stone wall. It seemed they had gone down the wrong path! time was running out and most of the Knights groaned in frustration as they felt about the great stone wall before them.

Smiling slyly, warlord told the group, "Watch this." Pushing a bit of moss out of the way he revealed a lever set into the wall. After lacing his fingers together and flexing them outwards, he grabbed the lever and..

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Thus ends Part 1.
Those of you present for the original telling may have noticed a few changes. These are due to available space, and my poor memory.. WH-Editor.